

September 6, 2016

To: Mr. Joe Maki and Mr. Michael Shore
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

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Re: Back Forty Mine Project

Dear Sirs,

The Badger Fly Fishers is a conservation minded group based in southern Wisconsin. As president of this 100 + member organization, I am writing to voice our disapproval of the Aquila sulfide mine project proposed for the Menominee River area.

The proximity of the proposed mine, within the Menominee River watershed, poses a very real environmental threat to the river and the ecosystem it supports. Many of our club members fish the Menominee River each year. I personally have fished the river for more than 14 years and, in fact, spent 21 days last year on the river. I know that many of the members of other fishing-related clubs in our area such as the Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance (100+ members), Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited (850+ members) and the Illinois Smallmouth Alliance (800+ members) travel to the Menominee River each year to fish, canoe and kayak this beautiful river.

In addition to the river use mentioned above, and to give you some idea of how many people utilize this river for recreation, Tightlines Guide Service, out of Green Bay, WI, provides over 400 guided fishing trips (2 anglers/boat) each season on the Menominee River. All of these anglers spend money at the local restaurants, motels, gas stations and grocery stores. The economic impact on this area is significant as you might imagine. I suspect the economic loss, should the Menominee River be negatively impacted by the proposed mine, would far outweigh any small economic gain the mine would have in the form of job creation or taxes.

The Menominee River is considered to be one of the best smallmouth rivers in North America. It also supports, musky, pike, sturgeon, amphibians and many species of birds and mammals. It provides recreational opportunities to thousands of people each year and this, in turn, provides a strong economic boost to the citizens living in this area. To jeopardize all of this for the small return the Back Forty Mine project might produce seems shortsighted at best. I hope you will prohibit this project from moving forward. Thank you for any consideration you give this letter.

With regards,

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